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The Tragedies of Silence

BY RALPH W. SOCKMAN

Ye are witnesses of these things. Luke 24:48.

IF we were to go to a courtroom tomorrow, take our places in the spectators' gallery and observe the proceedings, we should thereby become witnesses of the trial. But up near the judge's bench and the jury box is a seat called the witness chair. It is reserved for those who are to give testimony. Those who sit in that seat are not merely witnesses *of* the trial; they are witnesses *at* the trial. Thus the word "witness" may be used in these two different ways.

The Master in his closing discourse, as recorded by Luke, recounts the events and experiences of his last earthly days. He ends his account by saying to his disciples, "Ye are witnesses of these things." That is what they had been, spectators at their Lord's trial. To be exact, they had not even been present at the actual proceedings. One of them, Peter, led on by love yet held back by fear, had trailed the captured Christ as far as the yard outside the courtroom. He had kept close enough to see what was going on, but he had raised no voice of defense. The others had fled at the time of Jesus' arrest, but they had no doubt hung around in the crowd during those trying last hours. In short, they had been witnesses of the trial of Jesus.

Contrast their cowardly conduct before the Master's death with their attitude a few weeks later as they went around the streets of Jerusalem boldly proclaiming repentance and remission of sins through the name and power of their risen Lord. After the crucifixion something happened which transformed the timid, frightened disciples into triumphant, radiant heralds of the Christ. They were changed from fearsome, silent witnesses *of* Jesus' trial into courageous, outspoken witnesses *at* his trial.

In a true sense, the trial of Jesus, be it remembered, did not end when Pilate gave sentence. It went on after

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the crucifixion. In fact, the most critical part of the proceedings was after Calvary. Christ was far more concerned with what would happen to the body of his teaching than with what happened to the body of his person. What he had done and said, the things for which he stood, the revelation which he had given—these must not be condemned to the death of oblivion. The courtroom of the living Christ is eternally open. His case is in progress wherever his principles are being challenged. His trial is now on.

WORLD VERSUS CHRIST

And what is the present situation in the case of the world versus the Christ? If we were to picture our contemporary world under the figure of his courtroom trial, we could say that the spectators' gallery is quite full. More people are interested in what is going to happen to Christ and his program than ever before. Almost all persons who lay any claim to culture take some interest in the subject of Jesus of Nazareth. The counsel table also might be said to be pretty well manned. To be sure, we need more good professional pleaders of Christ's cause, but we have more preachers than pulpits. Ministers are the necessary legal staff who must present the arguments for Christianity. But with all our need of good pulpit advocates, the most pressing demand today in the trial of the Christ is for witnesses to give evidence. There are so many more persons able to argue for Christianity than there are those able and willing to tell of what it is doing for them. And remember, an ounce of actual religious news is worth a ton of theological argument.

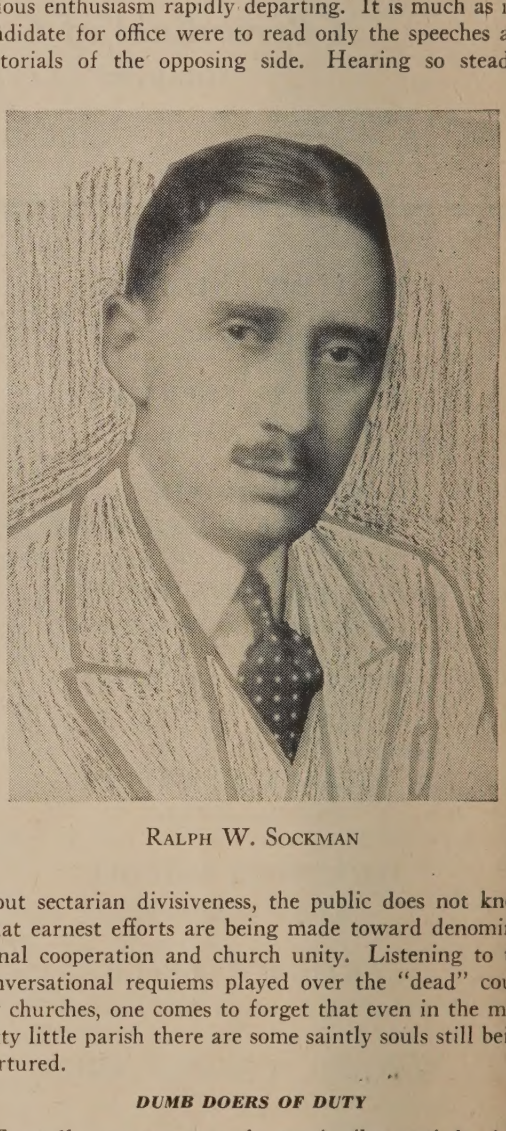
Today, as yesterday, religious groups grow whenever and wherever their members tell of their personal evidences and share their experiences. The early Christian church began as a lay movement, each person telling what the Lord had done for him. But now the conventional church program has deteriorated into a kind of professional propaganda, financed by silent spectators. We hire professional preachers to deliver our sermons and read our Bibles for us. We engage professional singers to voice our religious praise. We, in many places, pay professional evangelists to recruit our membership. And all the while, the laity simply sit back and pay the bills—and some just sit back.

THE SILENCE OF IGNORANCE

This professionalism and spectatorship are among the chief causes of listlessness and weakness in the church today. A crucial need in the trial of Christ is for men to move from the spectators' gallery to the witness chair. We may well consider, then, the tragedies of silence.

In the first place, there is the silence of the ignorant. A writer of distinction took a trip some years ago through the Mediterranean countries. He had been trained in his youth for the priesthood. Various observations and experiences, however, had led him to the belief that Christianity had wholly lost touch with Christ. He had become an avowed skeptic in religion. After his visit he confessed that the sight of certain Christian relief work being done in the Near East struck him with the force of a new discovery. He was surprised to find that some people were taking the principles of Christ seriously. The reason for his surpri was that he had been ignorant of the many similar wor of love and mercy going on in our own country and the mission fields. Viewing the Christian enterprise fro the balcony of an aloof spectator, he had seen only t millinery and the bald spots of the church, for such a the features most visible to the balcony eye.

Reading the secular press which plays up the defec of the churches and the sins of churchmen and balan ing this stream of suggestion by no news of the redem tive programs now in progress, a person finds his r ligious enthusiasm rapidly departing. It is much as if candidate for office were to read only the speeches a editorials of the opposing side. Hearing so steadi



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about sectarian divisiveness, the public does not kno what earnest efforts are being made toward denomin tional cooperation and church unity. Listening to t conversational requiems played over the "dead" cou try churches, one comes to forget that even in the mo petty little parish there are some saintly souls still bei nurtured.

DUMB DOERS OF DUTY

Secondly, we may note the tragic silence of the dut ful but dumb. In this group are those who believe Christ's ideals and purposes. Their motives and mora are in line with the Master's rules. But they feel th the only necessary way to show their loyalty to the Lord is by doing their work honestly and by living the lives honorably. Hence they make no public acknow edgment of their religious faith. They give themselv to no open forms of worship.

With their point of view one can feel considerab

sympathy. Conduct is much more important than speech. Words without works are as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. On the other hand, however, works without words can subtly lose the music of their doing. Many a home has lost the melody and romance of its love because husband and wife worked for each other but neglected the words and expression of affection. Love between man and woman, or between friend and friend, cannot remain vigorous long if left in silence. Human love that is dumb soon grows deaf, even blind.

So it is between man and God. When we serve him in silence and solitude we find the temperature of our affection gradually cooling off. A Scotch minister once drove this truth home in vivid though homely fashion when calling upon a man who had ceased his church attendance. Without comment or argument, the pastor lifted a blazing coal from the grate fire and laid it upon the hearthstone. Together the two men watched it die down from a white heat to a sullen redness and then to an ashen paleness. The lesson went home.

The solitary and silent servant of God has not been proved a success by the testimony of history. Social contact and vocal expression are essential to warm and vital religion. We need at times to "unpack our hearts" with words of confession to someone else. When, too, we are standing on lonely picket duty, facing the personal temptations encamped around us in the dark, we want to feel the touch of a friendly shoulder and know that we are not alone in the struggle. Furthermore, "praise is comely," and nothing heightens a man's stature more than to bow before a Higher Power. When we try to phrase our gratitude for God's blessings, we unconsciously begin to make an inventory of divine favors. We rummage among our forgotten gifts. We discover unlabeled mercies. Our sense of indebtedness wells up within us. Our words of praise become wings which lift us Godward. "Silence is golden," says an old maxim. Sometimes it is. But silence, continued too long, can become leaden in the life of the spirit.

THE INERTIA OF THE INTELLIGENT

A third tragic silence is that of the superior. One of the most paralyzing features in American life today is the inertia of the intelligent. This is apparent in the civic sphere. How the political life of our country could be lifted if the people of education and refinement would assume active responsibility in civic affairs instead of sitting aloof and leaving public business so frequently to be mismanaged by the machines and professional politicians! Our politics will remain on an inferior plane as long as so many persons think themselves superior to its struggles.

Similarly, in the spiritual realm we have those who admit religion to be a good thing for wayward boys to keep them off the street, a comforting thing for the aged to prepare them for heaven, a strengthening thing for the weak to give them hope and virtue. But for themselves, strong, self-supporting, competent—well, religion, or at least the church, is something which they do not need. Hence they may send a check to the minister for the support of the church, but they do not show their personal dependence on it by their presence or their speech.

There come to mind two gentlemen who, during one of those prosperous years in the 1920's, each gave $2,500 a year to the church but managed to remain in the city and attend its services only twice that winter. On that basis the minister figured that each of those men paid $1,250 per sermon heard, and the preacher of course flattered himself by thinking that they got the worth of their money. But they did not. And the church did not get the full worth of their money. If the church could have had a fraction of their money and a multiple of their time, it could have made religion so much more attractive to them and so much more dynamic to the people whom those men desired to serve. For what happens is this, that the boys whom such men wish the church to help soon begin to look around for these strong men and to say that if the church is not big enough for the big fellows it must not be big enough for them. Consequently the lads drop out. If religion is to be redemptive, the strong must be partners in the enterprise, and not mere patrons of it. The silence of the church's absentee landlords is nothing less than tragic.

COWARDLY SILENCE

A fourth type of painful silence is that of the cowardly. Silence is one of the subtlest forms of cowardice. It can camouflage the yellow streak, not only from others but even from the one who has it. It can take so many aliases that it entirely eludes the detection of conscience.

The silence of cowardice can assume the polite garb of tact, which is a very desirable quality in softening the application of truth, but a very damnable trait when it substitutes for truth. And how often it does just that! It was said of a certain diplomat that he knew how to keep silent in six languages. This evasive silence, masquerading as tact, has so permeated diplomacy as to make the word almost synonymous with deceit. Nations send ambassadors to other capitals in order to interpret countries to one another and to preserve their "honor." And as a result, we have a diplomacy so full of evasive silences that we are left in the dark about the real motives of other governments; and as for this boasted "national honor," it has reached such a low level that no nation seems willing to trust the word of another. Before nations talk about defending their honor with guns, let them make their honor worth defending by truth. Never more than now have we needed to hear the words of the Master, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"—free from the suspicions which lurk behind the silences, free from the ultimate entanglements of half-truth. Away with the cowardly silences of diplomacy and let governments say what they mean, and then mean what they say!

And this silence of cowardice has another popular and eminently respectable form, called discretion. To protect oneself by a downright lie is beneath the contempt of a gentleman; but to be discreetly silent is often regarded as one mark of a gentleman. It sometimes is. When gossip is raging in a room it is a gentlemanly discretion to withhold items which might add fuel to the flames. When the facts are not clear and discussion is being carried on in the darkness of half-knowledge, it is wise discretion to keep silent until more light breaks.

Silence maintained out of consideration for truth, or for others' welfare, is most commendable.

But how different is the cowardly silence which often calls itself discretion, which holds its tongue when speaking out would be unpopular, but might save a principle or a reputation that is being torn to shreds! To be safely silent when a sensitive issue is under discussion; to be conveniently absent from one's seat in Congress or legislative assembly when a ticklish vote is to be taken; to suffer a sudden lapse of memory when embarrassing questions are asked—such attitudes may be called discretion, but in reality they are despicable cowardice.

Our day of dishonest propaganda and cowardly silences needs some private and public servants of society who are willing to take a few raps for the sake of bringing truth out into the open. The late John Galsworthy once centered a drama around a young politician who refused to be silent when his country was guilty of injustice to a smaller nation. His friends besought him not to risk his career by protesting to his superiors. His wife deserted him when he did make his unpopular protest. He surrendered his office and ultimately was killed by an infuriated mob because he would not keep silence when he felt the call to speak the truth.

Such personal courage does more than purge a single soul; it serves to clear the air for a whole people. And God knows how much the cloudy uncertainties of our troubled time would be cleared if more persons would break the silence of cowardice.

THE TRAGEDY OF NEUTRALITY

And lastly may we mention a fifth tragedy of silence, which is that of the neutral. We hear a great deal about neutrality today, and it is well that we should, for nothing needs more study than this subject of being neutral. If two of my friends fall into dispute, my friendship for both prompts me to remain neutral; but if their quarrel involves a principle of right and wrong, my loyalty to that principle, as well as to those friends, demands that I let it be known where I stand. If two nations fall into conflict, it behooves our country to keep out of their war; but if that struggle involves certain standards of justice and righteousness, our loyalty to those standards and to the family of nations requires that we make known where we stand.

In fact, when bullets are flying around, sheer common sense of safety should prompt neutrals to let it be known where they stand, lest they themselves be hit. Neutrality does not mean keeping silent when truth and justice are being shot down. Neutrality may well sheathe the sword of interference, but it should not silence the words of influence. Neutrality should keep us from jumping into the brawls of other nations, for we never settle anything by jumping into fights anyhow; but moral decency and Christian duty demand that we exert every effort to create an atmosphere of equity in which fighters cannot get their breath. And the breath of fighters is money and materials. Cut those off and fights are soon stifled.

We shall not make any specific applications of this truth. You see where it points. But let us be clear as to principle. We may differ as to the methods of making our influence felt, but when Christ's ideals are being crucified, his followers are called upon to show thei colors. Our age is more polite than that of first-cen tury Palestine. We have become very tolerant towar the person of Christ. Yet it may be that the Chris would have preferred the cries of the crucifying mob t the tragedies of our cold silence.

The world needs no noisy religion. Nor is it profite by an outpouring of personal experiences so lurid tha they focus attention on the sins committed rather tha on their redemption. This is one of the perils whic beset rescue missions and group "sharing." There is temptation of exhibitionism to which even the pious ar prone. The coloring of one's actual experience in orde to make it interesting to others, the enhancement o details as the testimony is repeated—these are evil against which witnesses for Christ must guard. Som modern publicized confessions are as undesirable a some of the stereotyped testimonies of the old-fashione prayer meetings were deadly.

Men of taste are repelled by those who talk too easil and glibly about their personal religion. Jesus, the gen tleman, liked persons of reserve and rebuked the empti ness of words without works. But what Christianit does need is the translation of the apostolic ways of wit nessing into twentieth-century terms concrete enough t be convincing and plain enough to be appealing. If th disciples of Christ were to express their religious experi ences in the same simple, straightforward language i which they discuss their business, we should bring t religion that quickening of pulse which is so marke in the market place.

Rediscovering the Foundations

We seem to have come from nowhere and to be going nowhere. The moral breakdown of lives, the weakening of family ties, the paganizing of many areas of life, and a threatened collapse of the social structure of civiliza tion are the natural fruit of such contracted views. A pyramid standing on its apex is hardly more unstable than a civilization that has lost the poise and balance of well-grounded faith in spiritual realities.

A university professor talking with a group of his students called on them to be men and play the game of life. "But how are we going to play the game of life," one of the students asked, "when we don't know where the goal posts are?" That is the trouble, how are you going to make a great life when you have no assurance that life itself has any meaning, or purpose, or significance? If there are no goal posts, there can be no game. Our first business is to find the goal posts for the greatest of all adventures. Our task is to rediscover the foundations on which a great spiritual civilization can be built and great lives fashioned.

Rufus M. Jones.

It is perilous to separate thinking rightly from acting rightly. He is already half false who speculates on truth and does not do it. Truth is given, not to be contemplated, but to be done. Life is an action—not a thought. And the penalty paid by him who speculates on truth is that by degrees the very truth he holds becomes a falsehood. Frederick W. Robertson.

The Soul's Desire For God

By Maude Royden

I perish with hunger! I will arise, and go to my father. Luke 15:17, 18.

THE parable of the Prodigal Son has been called the heart of the Christian faith, and yet right in the middle of it there occur these strange words: "I perish with hunger. I will arise and go to my father." It was, surely, rather an inadequate motive. It seems to give some kind of color to the accusation that is brought against Christian people that their religion is merely an effort to get something which they could not get in any other way; the sort of Christian who in China used to be called "a rice Christian" because he professed conversion in order that he might secure food from the charitable Christian congregation.

Dr. Sherwood Eddy told me that when he preached in India he used to go to the outcaste villages, and preach Christianity to them, and he would point to those villages which had accepted Christianity, and whose material condition had enormously improved in consequence. I remember a fellow Christian who was present exclaiming with horror: "Is that the sort of materialism that you preach?" And Dr. Eddy said: "Yes, I do not know why I should be less materialistic than my Master." Right in the center of the Lord's Prayer there is that petition: "Give us this day our daily bread."

But if you compare, or, rather, contrast these motives "I perish with hunger; I will arise and go to my father" with the aspirations of some of the saints you will be rather painfully struck with the inadequacy of that motive. Those of you who are readers of some of the great classics of the spiritual life, like *The Imitation of Christ* or *Lady Julian of Norwich* will remember that the great desire of the saint is always that he may love God for himself alone. That he could not love him for anything at all that he could get out of him. Just because he is God, that he should love him for himself alone, and for no other motive whatever.

THE CHILDLIKE AND THE CHILDISH

"I perish with hunger. I will arise and go to my father." There comes to the modern student of religion the revelation of psychology, and we find that even when we thought we were loving God for himself we almost certainly were not; that we loved him for something more spiritual than the loaves and the fishes, yet it was for something that we thought we might get out of him. This is truly childish. What is childish in grown-up people is childlike in a child. If a child refuses to be childlike in its sheer physical needs, which are all the needs it is conscious of when it first comes into the world, it cannot grow at all. A child must receive its mother's milk. Its first impulse is its attraction to its mother because that mother is the source of its food; and if the child decided that it would not be attracted to its mother for any such material reason as that, because the mother's milk was such a childish food, of course the child would not grow at all. Because obviously, the kind of food that it might be tempted to take, the food of a mature person, it could never eat, nor digest. And the result of such an attitude, if it could be imagined on the part of the child, would be not life, but death; something worse than paralysis even. Because no one begins life grown up.

We begin as little babies conscious only of our physical need; but there is nothing contemptible or repulsive in a child for that reason. I read in a statement by Mrs. Clutton Brock, the wife of the well-known art critic, that the first time her child turned to her and recognized her, she was thrilled with joy. She said that no one could imagine, who had not known it, the rapture of that

Maude Royden

recognition by the child. She said: "Not only did the child recognize me as the source of food and warmth; but that it should instinctively turn to me was a joy no one but a mother could understand."

We must consent to this humble love of our parents while we are still babies, or we perish. We must consent to be fed by our mothers; we must consent to be protected by our fathers. We must not proceed to argue with ourselves that these are poor and ignoble ways of loving, and that we ought to love them for something more than that. But unless we begin at the beginning we shall never arrive at the point where we are capable of an understanding of the spiritual life.

Why do we want God? Let us be as honest as the psychoanalysts would have us be. We need food. We are frightened, and we want courage. We are dissatisfied, and we want satisfaction. We are lonely and we want love. We are despised and we want to be valued. We are futile and we want a purpose. We are weak, and we want power. We are anxious and we want

serenity. We are in discord, and we thirst for peace. And all these are things that we want from God. Well, those are the motives which, if we are quite honest with ourselves, will be, generally speaking, why we feel our lack of God, and why we seek for him, and want him.

Let us be even more honest than the psychologist. Sometimes our motives are rather bad motives. We want food; I mean now material food. I am thinking of people who are starving; I am thinking of people who are habitually underfed. Is that a bad thing? As a matter of fact, not to want food is a very bad sign. If you do not want food it is, perhaps, because you have overeaten, or because you have indigestion, or because you are mentally in a wrong state of mind. Many of you know that when a person who is hovering on the edge of insanity begins to refuse food, it is a very bad sign, a very sinister sign for the future. It is either your body or your mind that is wrong if you do not desire food; there is something the matter.

And to desire food is wholesome and right. It is like wanting life. If you want to die—unless the time has come for you to die—that is bad too. The wholesome attitude is to want to live. And to reject food is like rejecting life itself. And all these other things—courage, love, purpose, power, peace, serenity—all these are good things, and everyone has a right to want them; and it is their duty to want them; and there is something the matter with those who do not want them.

COMING AS LITTLE CHILDREN

Yes, you say, these are good, but they are not good enough. No, they are not good enough, but they are good to start with. If you will not receive the kingdom of God as a little child you will never receive it at all. Our Lord emphasizes that again and again. You know how often we are told that he took a little child and set him in the midst. He told us that we should not despise the immaturity in children. There is that verse, the most famous and loveliest of all! "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein." We must accept these humble motives at the start, for unless we do, we shall never start at all. We must see if the motive is good, and if it is good, we must accept it quite humbly. There are bad motives, and if you start your search for God with a bad motive, you won't get anywhere; because it is not God you are looking for at all. God is the Father of lights in whom is no variableness or shadow of turning, and from him cometh every good and perfect gift.

And so in all honesty we must examine these motives of ours and see if they are really good. To want power is good, but if you want it in order to dominate other people, or in order to show off, and to try to convince people that you are greater than they, it is bad. To want love is good, for love is lovely, but that sort of love which makes you exclude other people, that dreadful possessive which causes more resentment in the human heart than anything else I can think of, that is not real love; it is possession. We want to be honest with ourselves, and to search out our motives to see whether they are good.

To want peace is good. The soul that is at peace with itself and with God is the soul that can also give peace to others. But a peace which is merely indifference; that is not good, because it is not really peace. We must not desire any of these things that are caricatures of what is good; and if you are starting out in your search after God with that sort of motive, then it is not God you are looking for at all, and you will never find God while such are your motives. But to be humble and so child-like as to be almost childish, I think we must learn to accept that. Because spiritually you see most of us are very immature.

A START MUST BE MADE

There are people who are repelled by the idea of God as Father because they say that such an attitude keeps us childish, and we ought really to be mature. I have never been able to feel very mature in the presence of God, and I doubt whether in this world we ever shall feel mature in the presence of God. We are children, and all our spiritual growth depends on our accepting that fact. Let us look humbly at our motives and accept them if they are good, even if they may seem to us to be rather childish. If that is where we are it is from there that we must start, and not from some higher plane where, in fact, we are not. If you wait to advance until you have begun to advance, well then you will continue to wait. We must be prepared to go forward we must start from where we are. This simple desire for God may not seem to be good enough for us, but it is good enough for God. To refuse to start at all because you cannot start higher up is to be like a sulky child. There is something resentful and proud in such an attitude. Let us be rid of such a spirit.

Some of you have had this experience: When you were going to say your prayers, when you kneel down you cannot get started, because you have something on your mind, or because you are cross or tired, and you say to yourself: "I cannot turn to God in this frame of mind. My mind must be a little quieter; I must have a heart at leisure from itself." And then when you turn to seek God he comes to find you where you are.

GOD COMES TO US WHERE WE ARE

There is something discouraging to us in the greatness of those saints who speak to us continually about desiring God for himself alone. It is at such times that it is definitely consoling to read the story of the Prodigal Son. "I perish with hunger; I will arise and go to my father." There is something very simple about that, something far more worthy of respect than that sulky attitude which will not start at the beginning. Our Lord tells us that the father came to meet the prodigal when he was yet a great way off. He was in such a pathetically inadequate spiritual state that he had little conception of what his father really was to him; he had so little understanding of what his father was ready to give him. "While he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him."

Here is our inspiration. Our Lord comes to us where we are. We are aware of the inadequacy of our reasons for desiring God. But "his father saw him, and had compassion on him." That is the beginning; not the end.

The Springs of Surplus Power

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

ONE of the truest descriptions ever written of a deeply religious man is found in the first Psalm: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water." The genuinely religious life, that is, has roots which reach down to dependable springs of vitality. Even when the rains without fail, the reserves within are adequate. Whatever happens, says the Psalmist, you can count on such a man—he "bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither." Concerning that kind of vital, dependable living we think today, and two convictions are in the background of our sermon: first, that such inward adequacy for life is the bestowal of a great religion, as the Psalmist said, and, second, that there can have been few times in history when it was more needed than today.

INDIVIDUAL MUST CHOOSE HIS FAITH

To be sure, life always has thrown the individual back upon himself. "Every tub must stand on its own bottom" is an ancient proverb. Today, however, despite all that society may do to save individuals from the consequences of their inability and misfortune, men, I suspect more than ever before, are one by one thrown back upon themselves. This is true economically. The old patriarchal system, where the tribe was behind the individual and so long as the tribe had anything the individual was secure—that is gone. The old feudal system, where though a man might be a serf he had a feudal lord and, as the serf was pledged to the lord's defense, so the lord was pledged to the serf's support—that is gone. The old agricultural system where, however low the level of subsistence, the land was nevertheless owned by the family and capable of supporting it—that is being rapidly displaced by the individualism of our city life.

Today, however, we are thinking not so much of these economic conditions, which our social security measures are trying to meet, as of their spiritual counterparts. Once there was an authoritative world view, a general consensus of doctrine and idea with which nearly everyone agreed, but now each individual must decide what faith he personally will hold concerning life. Once there was an accepted code of moral conduct, standards of right and wrong to which the whole community with approximate unanimity consented, but now, among conflicting standards, each individual has to choose his criteria of conduct. As never before in human history, I think, we men and women, one by one, are thrown back upon ourselves.

OUR HECTIC, ANXIOUS LIVES

The consequence of this is clear. Multitudes of individuals cannot stand being thrown back upon themselves. Economically that is so; spiritually it is so. Here lies one major explanation of the fact, as a physician puts it, that "neurasthenia, or nerve fatigue, is the most significant disease of the age." Watching individuals thrown back upon themselves and unable to meet the issue, we understand the reason for how many careworn faces, how many nervous, hectic, anxious lives, ticking like clocks that have lost their pendulums, all poise and balance gone, how many collapses of character and breakdowns of morale! Multitudes of us, thrown back on ourselves, cannot stand it. We are not like trees planted by rivers of water. We have no personal access to resources of inner power adequate for life.

I am taking it for granted that we all understand what this means. I do not see how anyone can fail to understand. And the initial remark to be made about it is that volition is no solution. Some things we can achieve by willing them. The details of life, getting on with the day's tasks, not running away in a pinch, items of conduct deliberately chosen or refused—the will has power over them. But now turn your will toward your inward life. Choose amid the storms of life to have a steadfast, central peace, choose amid the strains of life to have reserves of ample inward power, and often the harder you drive your will the worse off you are. That is to say, the will works best the more external its objective is, so that often the question of free will has been debated around items like picking up a pencil from a desk. I am free, says the debater, either to take up or not to take up this pencil; therefore there is something in free will. Granted! But now make the objective of your search not outward but inward. Will to be spiritually adequate for life. Will to have resources so that what you ought to do you can do and what you must endure you can stand. Will to be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season and its leaf also shall not wither, and you run into a momentous fact without apprehending which I think no man has ever begun to live. What you are asking for there it is not within volition's power to bestow. What you are seeking there is a great philosophy under life, adequate backing behind life, resources of spiritual vitality into which you can thrust your roots to assimilate life. What you are asking for is a great religion, which with Paul can say, "Though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day."

HOW TO WIN STABILITY

Every person in this congregation, one way or another, is being thrown back on himself. Concerning that situation, then, note in the first place that there is no such thing as interior stability and security without two methods, two techniques, in life: on the one side, aggressiveness, deliberate volition; on the other, surrender to the influence of life's regenerating forces. Souls walk like a man, on two feet; fly like a bird, with two wings; row like a boat, with two oars. Deliberate attack on life—that is one. Surrender to the saving influences of life—that is another. On one side, a man blows on his hands, puts his back into life, and does something. On the other, he falls under the spell of life's regenerating influences, feels power well up within him from reserves beyond himself, is led in green pastures and beside the still waters, and his soul is restored.

In many years of personal ministry to individuals, I have seen few people more pathetic than those who know

all about the first technique and nothing about the second. Commonly such folk have started handsomely, backed by their families, surrounded by their friends, gifted with ability, laying strong hands on their tasks and doing them well. At last, however, life does to them that inevitable thing that no man can escape—it throws them back on themselves. Some failure, some great responsibility, some sin, some disaster, and, lo! life and the soul face each other now in an experience that urges one question home: How deep are your roots? Have you personal access to reserves of power adequate for life? Now, when blowing on your hands means little, do you know what the New Testament is talking about—"strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man"?

A SCIENTIST SPEAKS

In the presence of such an experience, this at least is clear—the question of interior stability and security is a power-question. No one can be inwardly secure without reserves of power. At that point the effect of irreligion is commonly shattering. Listen to this: "If we consider the effect of irreligion as increasing our helplessness to resist the storms of life, its relation to nervousness cannot be doubted." That is one of the leading neurologists of the world speaking. Well, I should say so! For the logical effect of irreligion is to reduce a man to one technique. Put your back into life, it says; and that is about as far as irreligion can go. But that is not far enough. I did not get here first; the universe got here first; and the most determining relationship in my life is between me and the universe and what is ultimately real there. It is silly to put me over against this vast cosmos and tell me to put my back into it as though that were enough to live on, and especially as though in stormy days that were enough to give steadfastness and strength.

O Irreligion, my soul cries out, I see what you are really saying. What you are saying is that there are no eternal, regenerative forces in the world, from which I came, with which I can ally myself, from which I can draw power, and in whose backing and support I can find stability. That is what you are really saying and it is a devastating thing to say, "increasing our helplessness to resist the storms of life." For if with steadfastness I am to put my back into life, I need backing.

Now, a man of religious faith and life has it. Say what we will about religion's failings, it has bestowed that. "Mysticism . . . brings to man the fulfillment of his highest desires: inner strength, spiritual light, divine love, ineffable peace"—that is Alexis Carrel, physicist and physician, speaking. Here is an experience that runs up to the doorsill of our most modern life, that psychologists, neurologists and physicists cannot blind their eyes to, and that runs far back into the noblest living of the ancient ages, saying with Isaiah, "They that wait for the Lord shall renew their strength."

Surely, it is not possible to wave aside this vast mass of human experience as a delusion. It cannot be a delusion. If it had been a delusion, nothing real to correspond with it or answer to it, it would have faded out long ago. There is such a thing as being like a tree planted by the rivers of water.

At any rate, if with strength and staunchness we are to face this life, we need more than our own backs to swear by. William the Conqueror had a special oath reserved for great occasions, and whenever he used it it has been said, the earth shook. "By the Splendor of God!" said William the Conqueror. All the conquerors I know of in the supreme matters of the spiritual life have had more than their own backs to swear by; or their great occasions they had reserves whose springs reached back to the splendor of God.

RELIGION AS FORM AND FORCE

In the second place, however, we must note that when we talk about religion in terms of such personal access to reserves of available power, we are talking about first-hand religion and not about its secondary elements. The New Testament describes people who have the form of godliness but have denied the power thereof, and to that text Dr. Moffatt has given a new translation. "Though they keep up," he says, "a form of religion, they will have nothing to do with it as a force."

That ought to come home to some of us today—religion as a form but not a force. In a church like ours especially this needs to be said. Our numbers multiply, our membership increases, and in general we of this numerous company are religious people, but what does that mean—religious people? We believe in God; we think the church is a good thing to belong to; we have a Christian heritage in our families, whose traditions we value; we have been attracted, it may be fascinated, by Christ's life, and in general we think that the world needs what he stands for. Isn't that about as far as many of us go? But to have personal access to inward reserves of strength for daily life—that is something else. To possess amid the storms of life a strong and central peace that, as Paul says, stands guard over our hearts and thoughts—that is something else. To have resources so that when duty says, This ought to be done, we know we can do it, and when trouble says, This must be endured, we know that we can stand it—that is not religion as a form but as a force.

LIFE NOT A POOL BUT A RIVER

Many things in life are used as stilts, not really increasing our stature but only making us seem larger than we are. Money, social position—countless things—can be used as stilts. The forms of religion can be so employed. Men, as it were, stand on them. Their membership in the church, their creedal beliefs may be simply stilts which do not greaten their stature but only make them seem greater than they are.

That is not religion. What great religion does to a man is something deeper. Here is a man who had always thought of his life as though it were a pool. He thought he had so much power and no more. His resources, like a pool's, were limited, fed by the immediate countryside. As the years passed, however, and the droughts came, on long, hot days he became aware that pools can dry up, and he lived an insecure, unstable life. Then great religion came to him and now he thinks no longer of his life as a pool but as a river. That is different. For a river's power is not so much *in* it as *through*

it. It comes from unfailing springs and if the cluttered waterways be opened to the living fountains, then in rain or drought, power flows on. So that man's life has been changed. All his friends see the difference; all his work shows it. He is not thinking of his life any more as a pool but as a river, and a new confidence has come into his living and a new peace into his soul. He understands what Paul meant when he said, "In Him who strengthens me, I am able for anything."

To be sure, this involves great matters and in particular it involves the way we think about God. I am venturing a daring thing this morning. I am bringing the doctrine of the Trinity into this modernist pulpit and, as though it were a person, I shall let the doctrine

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

talk to you. But, says someone, of all stereotyped and incredible aspects of Christian theology, the doctrine of the Trinity is about the most troublesome. Yes, I say, that is what formal theology has made of it but that is not the way it started. It started as an endeavor to make religion not a form but a force.

Says the doctrine of the Trinity to us today, you believe in God; what do you mean by God? Suppose a man answers: I mean that creative Mind is at the heart of the universe, that matter is not the last word, that the ultimate reality is spiritual. The doctrine of the Trinity replies: That is good and true; creative Mind is at the heart of the universe; but is that all that God means to you? Suppose, then, that the man bethinks himself and says: No, there is Christ, the historic Christ; I think we do see the light of the knowledge of God's glory in his face; where else could we expect to see the truth of the eternal Spirit except in the best spirit that has come to earth? we do find God in him. The doctrine of the Trinity will answer: That is good and true; but God, the creative Mind, is at the center of the universe and Christ lived in Palestine nearly two thousand years ago—is that all that God means to you? Suppose the man bethinks himself again and says: Well, there are times, special times, when he seems very close, not merely at the center of the universe, nor back in Palestine two thousand years ago, but near at hand available for my help, springing, as Jesus said, like a well of water within me into life—there are times like that. Then the doctrine of the Trinity says: So! that is the real God, creative Mind, revealing Character, interior Resource; you never know all of God until you know him all three ways, and yet he is one God.

Well, that is what the doctrine of the Trinity was trying to say at the first—make your religion not a form but a force. For when a man really apprehends that God is not only creative Mind and supreme Character, but is underground in his own life and that there through God he has access to reserves of exhaustless strength, alike on ordinary days and on great occasions when he is dangerously thrown back on himself—then he possesses stability and peace and power.

SOMETHING MUST HAPPEN WITHIN

Finally, however, we must go on to note that the outcome of this interior stability and peace is an extraordinary release of energy. That is a strange paradox of human life. Some may naturally have been thinking that our appeal for mysticism, for the interior bestowal that a great religion gives us of peace and stability, is selfish, and that the object of our search is a secure comfortableness. But all the time underneath our thought has been this basic fact about human nature: we cannot let ourselves go outwardly until we are sure of ourselves inwardly. You know what I mean, this skating-on-thin-ice feeling, this apprehension and fear that we may ourselves go through. You cannot skate under those circumstances. You cannot let yourself go and do your best till you are reassured about the stability beneath.

All through this congregation now are unreleased possibilities of practical service that never will be liberated until something profoundly reassuring, reinforcing happens within. That is, as it were, a universal law of nature and of life. If we want powerful dynamos, we must set them in something solid. If we want swift express trains, they must have sound rails to run upon. Clocks won't work without pendulums or their equivalent, and automobiles are no good without brakes. Nothing can let itself go and drive hard without some interior principle of stability to start from.

That is true about the spiritual life and you cannot get such stability by willing it. When our bodies are fagged out with the strain of life, we cannot by volition refill the spent, depleted reservoirs of our physical energies. No, we must establish right relationships with the universe. There is ample power there—in the air, in the sunlight, on the sea, among the mountains—plenteous power to be assimilated and appropriated, not so much by the body's activity as by the body's hospitality. Do you know what that analogy means in the spiritual life—what prayer is, in a word? Prayer is not begging; it is intake, uncluttering the waterways to the

living fountains and filling the inflow from exhaustless reservoirs.

One urges this the more earnestly because there is a prevalent kind of Christianity today that positively increases man's insecurity. Sometimes it is called practical Christianity, but it is the most impractical Christianity I know. I mean the Christianity of deeds only, active service, hard work, strenuous endeavor.

> Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve,
> And press with vigor on—

that kind of Christianity! But friends, do you know what kind of deeds Christianity requires? It is the highest ethic man ever tried to follow. When, then, a man gets only the activity side of Christianity without the power side, I would almost say he is in a worse case than he was before, facing the distraction of an utter lack of balance between the deeds he is trying to do and the resources he is trying to do them with, trying to run express trains on rails that will not hold.

Great Christianity starts with something profoundly reinforcing, regenerating, reassuring within, from which, as an inevitable consequence, comes an immense release of energy. And so emerges that most impressive fact in human experience, a profoundly spiritual person like a tree planted by the rivers of water. Some things, as Joyce Kilmer said about trees,

> . . . are made by fools like me,
> But only God can make a tree.

The Brooding Spirit of God

By Abraham J. Feldman

I ASK you to recall a sunset. Let us direct our minds' eyes toward the western horizon. The orb of the setting sun is sinking. Shafts of light—brilliant, many-hued—pierce the gathering darkness. Colors darken, beams of light are shortened. Swiftly now, the sun sinks. The dying glow of a day flickers across the almost dark sky. And now, the last glimmer of light fades. The day dies. Darkness wins the contest. It is night.

There are times when the arrival of night is depressing. Certainly, it casts a spell. Sometimes there is sadness with it; there is fear, and trembling.

But the thoughtful person does realize also that the victory of darkness over light is only local; it is transitory. We might remember that at the very moment when the day was losing the struggle here, it was dawning elsewhere. Light and darkness complement each other. They are compensatory phenomena. A few hours will pass, and a dawn will break anew. Beams of glory will dispel the sable darkness about us. And in the brightness of a new day night will vanish.

However, even the darkness has its uses. It may be a period of respite. It may provide an opportunity for undisturbed introspection for men and nations. It may lead to a greater appreciation of the value of light. Properly used, the night is an opportunity for the ingathering and the accumulation of strength for the day that is surely coming.

No matter how black the night is, man always goes forth to his labors in the day. And after the pause of night, he proceeds to build, to create, to advance. Even though the night halts his progress, with the new day he resumes the struggle and the adventure of life; and on the recurring nights he finds himself ever and ever again, in new locations, having marched ever onward.

Do We Face Civilization's Sunset?

Sometimes I think we are living in the twilight of an era, the sunset of civilization. For over a century have we basked in sunlight. The French Revolution was a struggle between the forces of medieval darkness and modern dawn. It was a bitter, painful conflict. But the light in the end dispelled the darkness. In its wake came liberation for men and peoples. Tyrannies vanished. Barbarism began to glide away. Autocracies became unfashionable. Humanitarianism, fraternity, internationalism, world brotherhood, universal peace—these concepts were on the march with banners unfurled and the stirring music of conquering ideals. Read the literature of the middle and the close of the nineteenth century. Read the utterances of men of vision at the dawn of the present century. There is music in their words, there were songs in their hearts. The millennium was marching as if in seven-league boots. It was almost "around the corner." Emancipation came. Democracy was enthroned. Thrones tottered and spewed forth their tinseled occupants. "The Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World," to use the winged words of Tennyson's youth in the 1840's, were imminent possibilities. Science, art, education were universal blessings, or becoming such. They came to stay, for ever and ever. "Ever, ever, and for ever was the leading light of man."

And by the light of these hopeful, happy facts there was also a grim and bitter conflict going on. Some people, of course, were not blinded by the light. They saw the evils, the moral decay beneath the glittering surface. By the side of progress and enlightenment there was decay—political, economic, industrial, individual; and, too late we learned, alas, that there was a curse in the fact that while we looked to the future we looked away from the then contemporary present. We were so sure that all would right itself—and that very soon.

The Debacle of the War Years

Well, it happened. The cancer spread while we lived in adolescent ecstasy. The World War came, and it still remains with us. Thrones tottered—but so did democracy. Dictatorships came in its stead. Fascism came. Nationalism of the most feudal type reared its ugly head. Racialism of the most spurious and malevolent kind crept into the seats of power. Paganism brazenly struck at the gates of sanctuaries and touched consecrated vessels, ideals and servants. Hypocrisy of the deadliest sort became the vogue, hypocrisy such as Italy's "civilizing" mission in Ethiopia, such as is the assassination of Spain by self-styled, blatantly self-proclaimed "civilized" nations; hypocrisy such as is England's policy in the Near East and Japan's "altruism" in the Far East.

With these came other pains. Hunger and homelessness, want amidst plenty; the repudiation of debts—national and international; the repudiation of treaties solemnly entered into; these, and a thousand other evils only too well known to you and me, have we endured in the world from which we come into our sanctuary tonight.

It is bitter out there, and the sun is setting. A heavy, threatening darkness rolls in over the face of our earth. A day, a year, perhaps an era or a civilization are being overwhelmed by the oncoming, creeping night.

And, I say it frankly, I am frightened, I am uneasy, as any but the playboys of life or the imbeciles must be.

And yet, I pause even now. I pause to ask myself

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this question: Is it really the end of day, or only the darkening of the sky in the midday due to a storm that is ominous and, let us admit it, dangerous and severe—and yet a passing storm, one that clears the air and makes the atmosphere fresh and lovely afterward? And, if it be the end of a day, or a year, or an era, is it the last day, the last year? Will no other day come? Will no other year, no new era of light and warmth and promise appear ever?

And, strange as it may be, the very questions imply reassuring answers. "And it was evening," we read in the Scriptural account of the creation. "And it was evening"—it was dark and bleak and unpromising then, when the world was *"Tohu"*—chaos, ere light and life were born. "And it was evening" when the world was *"Vohu"*—a void. "And it was evening" when *"Tohu vaVohu"*—chaos and void, confusion and darkness—reigned supreme. As the prophet Jeremiah has it in describing a time not unlike ours:

> I beheld the earth,
> And, lo, it was *"Tohu vaVohu"*—waste and void;
> And the heavens, they had no light.

"And it was evening" before creation, when life and order were not present except in potentiality. It was the evening when "darkness was over the face of the deep," the deep which covered the unformed earth.

But, amidst that abysmal, primordial, absolute darkness, so we are told, the spirit of God was brooding over the waters of chaos. And that made the difference between void and creation, between emptiness and a world of life and action and development. "The spirit of God," the Spirit Creative, the assurance of possible life and light, the promise of order and law, the facts of birth, of growth and unfolding, this Spirit of God was brooding or hovering over the chaotic waters. The primal night was to pass, because the spirit of God was there. Creation was to begin, because the spirit of God brooded over the emptiness.

But creation—physical and intellectual and spiritual—needs light. "And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light."

"And God saw the light that it was good." It does not say that the darkness was either good or desirable. The light was good. And when the light was there, we read then: "And there was evening. And there was morning. One day."

You see, the key to this majestic poem of the creation is to be found in this: the brooding spirit of God was there all the time amidst all the unformed waste and chaos. It is this spirit of creative promise and therefore of hope that led to the creation of light and the coming of the first and subsequent mornings, the sequence of all those other days of creation, when all that came into being was either good or very good.

THE BASIS FOR HOPE

And so, though heavy-hearted and perchance frightened we come out of the chaos outside, out of the affrighting darkness and storm and gloom in the world, I, the Jew, find in my God's house and in the words of his inspired children, as in the recorded facts of human experience, reassurance and hope; and finding these, my message out of the encircling gloom is not one presaging a universal doom. Aware as I am of the dangers of the situation in the world, I yet do not find despair in my heart, nor resignation to the abounding evils, nor acceptance of the darkness as ultimate and final. If I await the doom, it is the doom not of society, but the doom of darkness before the piercing rays of the light which the Creator found to be good from the very beginning, the light which has to precede all creation! If I expect surrender, it will be the ultimate flight of evil and chaos before the marching, irresistible forces of good and right marshaled by the pillar of light! These I confidently expect, because the spirit of God is still brooding over the face of the deep. I confidently expect the triumph of goodness and light, because I know that the divine command was given not for one day or one year or one generation. "Let there be light!" There *was* light! There *is* light even though it seems dark outside! And the light of truth, of mercy, of goodness; the light of

continued creation will continue to be! This I confidently expect.

Last summer, while preparing my book on *The American Jew* I reread many pages and chapters of Jewish history. Again and again as I read the record of the past, the lesson was emphasized for me. It is this: God is manifest in history, God's way is perceptible through history. The spirit of God *is* brooding over the chaos and waste of many ages and generations. Again and again, because of this brooding spirit, light comes after the darkness, good out of evil, order out of chaos, reassurance out of fear, hope out of despair. I find that, if Jewish history teaches anything at all, it imparts above all else this lesson of the brooding spirit who bids light to come "ever, and ever and for ever"!

"And God said: 'Let there be light,' and there was light, and the light was good."

THE USES OF NIGHT

Yes, darkness, too, comes periodically, but it does not last, neither is it absolute. Progress may seem slow, but in the perspective of history it appears to be constant. The sensible, the wise person knows that the night will pass, and will prepare for the new day. He will use the night. He will use it to recreate strength, to recoup courage, to recapture the vision, to restore hopefulness. You remember how in Franz Werfel's great pageant "The Eternal Road," our brethren in a timeless, ageless synagogue assembled in the night of terror, and out of the sacred pages read the story which never spelled despair, but always hope. And always they preserved the virtues which gave them character and dignity and the consciousness of worthy selfhood.

It is a strange and a significant fact that I have observed—as many of you, no doubt, did also. In "The Eternal Road" this was powerfully portrayed. Who are the most frightened amongst us? Who are the most hysterical, the most pessimistic, the most forlorn Jews? They are the ones who in the daylight seek escape from themselves and from us, they are the ones who in prosperity renounce their Jewish fellowship. They are the ones who know only the present moment, whenever it is, and are entirely lacking in the perspective of Jewish history and are uninformed of its significance. They are the ones who are generally faithless both to God and to Israel! The loyal ones who really are Jews, they are the least frightened and are not at all hysterical. That is so, because in their essential Jewish selfhood they are whole, neither fractured nor fractioned. They, like Job in his heyday, are conscious that God watches over Israel; they are conscious that his lamp shines above our head; they are certain that by his light we can walk even through darkness. They are not Pollyannas. There are times when even they could and do say with the Psalmist in his suffering:

> Surely the darkness shall envelop me,
> And the light about me shall be night,

yet, such is their faith and confidence, that they permit no despair to overwhelm them, knowing full well that

> Even the darkness is not too dark for Thee,
> But the night shineth as the day;
> The darkness is even as the light.

My friends, the night is here. Darkness is here. *"Tohu vaVohu,"* chaos and confusion are here. Bitter, indeed, is the lot of our brethren in many places. And the pinpricks of hatred are experienced everywhere by all of us.

The night is here. But my message to you, in spite of the prevailing gloom, is, "Do not despair!" Rather, let us utilize the night for the recreation of strength and courage, for the recapturing of vision and hope. "By His light we can walk even through darkness!" Our fathers did; and history proclaims the truth that

> The people that walked in darkness
> Have seen a great light;
> They that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,
> Upon them hath the light shined.

Face the east with me. As the night wears on the darkness will become less dense, and suddenly the first rays of a rising sun will sweep the horizon. The night will be no more. The skies will become irradiated in multiple-hued light, and across the eastern skies the sun will appear, the sun of righteousness with healing in its beams. I have no doubt as to that!

But now it is night. Let us pause. We must prepare even now for tomorrow. We must prepare resolutely, prepare courageously as did our fathers, eagerly as would our children.

> Weeping may tarry for the night,
> But joy cometh in the morning.

Have faith, then! Have confidence! Have trust! Submit to their lure, let them heal your bruises and wounds. "And in the morning, ye shall see the glory of the Lord."

The Captain of the Years

I WATCHED the Captains
A-riding, riding
Down the years;
The men of mystic grip
Of soul, a-riding
Between a hedge of spears.

I saw their banners
A-floating, floating
Over all,
Till each of them had passed,
And Christ came riding
A donkey lean and small.

I watched the Captains
A-turning, staring,
Proud and set,
At Christ a-riding there—
So calmly riding
The Road men can't forget.

I watched the Captains
Dismounting, waiting—
None now led—
The Captains bowing low!
The Caesars waiting!
While Christ rode on ahead.

ARTHUR MACDOUGALL, JR.

For Sinners Only

By Willard B. Thorp

If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. I John 1:8.

OUR generation is under a peculiar obsession in regard to religion. The obsession arises from the fact that the viewpoint of science has largely dominated our minds. When matters of religion are under discussion we turn spontaneously to questions like these: "How can we be sure there is a God? What real reason have we for thinking there is a life after death?" These are interesting and important questions, but after they have all been asked and answered as best we can, what have we? We have simply a speculative philosophy, and a speculative philosophy is quite a different thing from a religion. Religion is a matter of personal experience and personal devotion. A person may have that experience and that devotion without any philosophical theories at all, and he may have it under a great many different philosophical theories. In other words, our scientific age when it looks for religion looks usually in the wrong direction and it is not surprising that it does not find it.

Did you ever wake in the night and start for the bathroom in the darkness and find yourself completely lost in your own room? You ran up against a bureau and some candlesticks and an expanse of wall where you were sure it ought not to be. At length in your confusion you managed to press a button and turn on the light, and found to your dismay that you were headed in an entirely wrong direction—lost in your own room. Something very like that has happened to many people in these days in their quest for religion.

SELF-EXAMINATION THE RIGHT BEGINNING

Suppose we make an entirely different approach. The one I have to suggest is rather old-fashioned but that should be nothing against it. It is very individual and personal. It is also very costly, not nearly so easy and pleasant as arguing about this and that. But it is also much more rewarding, in fact it will get one directly in touch with the real thing.

It does not begin by examining questions of God and Christ and immortality. Those things will come along in due season as fast as they are needed, and there will be plenty of need for them before we are through. It begins by examining your own life in a way in which you alone can examine it—your conduct, your habits and practices, your principles and what you are doing about them. If you are satisfied that in these matters your record is clear, such that you would not hesitate to submit it to the scrutiny of a competent and impartial judge, then this particular line of inquiry I am suggesting is not likely to lead you to anything that can be called a vital religious experience. In other words, this is "for sinners only." If Jesus came along he would pass you by, saying, "I came not to call people like you but sinners to repentance." In fact you have got to be something of a sinner before you can acquire a religious experience, at least of the Christian type. Christianity is a religion of salvation and is intended for people who consciously need saving, namely for sinners, people who know they are sinners and just where they are sinners and are not at all happy about it either. Its object is to save them, not from the consequences of their sin—there is no possible way of doing that—but from their sin itself. And that salvation when they get it will bring them to God as nothing else can. Now you see just how old-fashioned this sermon is going to be.

I know of course the rather clever repartee that comes into the minds of some of you. You say: "Very well then, let us go out and commit some sins and then we may get religion." I mention that just so you may not think I had overlooked it. The answer of course is that you do not need to go out and add to your sins; you only need to search your heart and your life and you will find plenty of them. And that brings me to my text, which is: "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

Willard B. Thorp

If you do not believe that, just go into the chambers of your memory and recall certain things that are known to you and to you only. I do not mean far back in some previous period of your life, things you have outgrown and left behind. I mean things that you are doing now, things that you haven't abandoned but are practicing and cherishing and "rolling as a sweet morsel under your tongue."

RATIONALIZING SINS IS FUTILE

And do not attempt to let yourself out by covering it all with a blanket confession of general imperfection and weakness and error, as when a person says: "I am no pharisee, I am no church member, I make no profession of particular goodness; my record is doubtless imperfect but probably no more so than that of many others." No

one will ever get a religious experience by any such confession as that.

We most commonly deceive ourselves in regard to sins we are cherishing by excusing them, justifying them on various grounds. The psychologists call this "rationalizing." That is a word I dislike, because it perverts to a bad meaning a term that had become established in a good meaning. The *Century Dictionary* of 1911 does not give any recognition of the word in the sense in which it has so recently become college patter. But the thing itself is no new discovery but a familiar device under another name. When we want to do a thing very much, so much that we persist in doing it although we know it is wrong, we put up a smokescreen of defenses and arguments that will seem to justify it. We know perfectly well that they will not bear a moment's examination, any more than Japan's "excellent reasons" for ravaging China. Every criminal, every wrongdoer, and pretty nearly everybody else, practices that kind of self-deception more or less. We discover "excellent reasons" to justify our bad acts. "Love" covers a multitude of sins; and so do "loyalty" and "patriotism" and "business necessity" and "political necessity."

CLEAR-CUT DEFINITE ACTION NEEDED

Now unless you are a very unusual person, you will not get very far in your self-examination before you come up against something of which you know you ought to be heartily ashamed. It may not be the only thing that is wrong in your life. And it may not be the worst thing in your life: that is likely to be some fault to which you are totally blind and which your friends are too kind to point out to you. But if you are really in earnest about this matter of getting religious experience, take something that is on your conscience, something you know perfectly well that you ought to let alone, and which it would cost you a lot to give up. Turn squarely about and cut loose from that thing; make a thorough job of it.

I do not say, go and confess it to someone or stand up in a meeting and relate it to those present. I do not take much stock in the notion that by confessing a thing you somehow clear yourself of it; often you just infect others with it. True, it sometimes helps to talk over your troubles and problems, not necessarily with a priest or a minister but with a wise and understanding friend. But when it comes to our real sins concerning which we don't need anybody to tell us we are dead wrong, something much more radical is called for. And that is clear-cut, definite action, putting right something in your life that you know is wrong, the rotten spot in your life. All of us have been guilty of such sins, and most of us are guilty of them now—church people and non-church people, ministers and laymen, women and men, rich and poor, everybody.

THE PATH TO RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Somewhere in the Bible we find these words: "Be sure your sin will find you out." It will certainly find you out in the sense that it will put you in a false situation and make you miserably unhappy. It is doing so now for many of you. We have left undone things that we know we ought to have done, and we have done things we had no business to be doing; and so long as we keep it up there isn't going to be any health in us. I am not going to be specific about this, because these sins are different in different lives. I suspect that each one of us can put his finger on something in his own life that corresponds to what I am talking about.

Now when you lay that thing on the altar, and square yourself and make it absolutely right, you will have a definite religious experience. I cannot explain why it is so, but it is so nevertheless. At that point you have been building on a foundation of sand, living for appearances, living dishonestly. The consciousness of it haunts you, you cannot get away from it. You were straight in every other way but at that point you were crooked; at that point you couldn't look God in the face, you couldn't look your own self in the face. The only escape is to "come clean," as the phrase is, dig down and plant your feet on the solid rock of what you know is true and right. And the moment you do that you touch God. It isn't a matter of logic or theory, it is a matter of fact. You have a release of something in your life that hasn't been there for a long time.

No wonder your religion has become unreal. There is a connection between religion and thoroughgoing righteousness, and your experience has been revealing that to you. (That may be the meaning of "revealed religion" as distinguished from "natural religion.") But the thing I am trying to say is that when you touch righteousness at the point where it costs you most to do it, at that moment you make contact with God. There may be other ways of doing it, but this is certainly one way and a necessary way, and it is within the reach of every one of us. You will find yourself really praying, and your prayer will be: "O God, forgive me for what I have been and done; I thank Thee that I have found Thee again."

REGAINING THE "LOST RADIANCE"

That was the reason Jesus went to sinners, to people who knew there was something in their lives that was false and wrong. That was why he passed by those who were smugly complacent about themselves. He said some scorching things about them, and they were unable to take it. They put him to death because he told them the truth about themselves. But they did not put their sin to death; it stayed with them and kept on making their religion a mockery.

You and I have got to meet this situation in our own lives, and when we do we shall find God and recover the "lost radiance." I have been through it again and again, and each time it has meant finding God anew. And I know that I am not finished with it. Something will come up again and I shall have to square myself there. And some day I may find my "blind spot" and get rid of that. Perhaps that was what Paul meant by those words about seeing in a mirror darkly, and then face to face. This is the only way we can grow and keep on growing.

If you doubt it, try it for yourself. You will come out of the sense of darkness and unreality and into the light and joy of fellowship with God, and you will find yourself singing with new understanding that old gospel hymn, "On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand."

Spiritual Broadcasting

By Alexander MacColl

Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world. Romans 10:18.

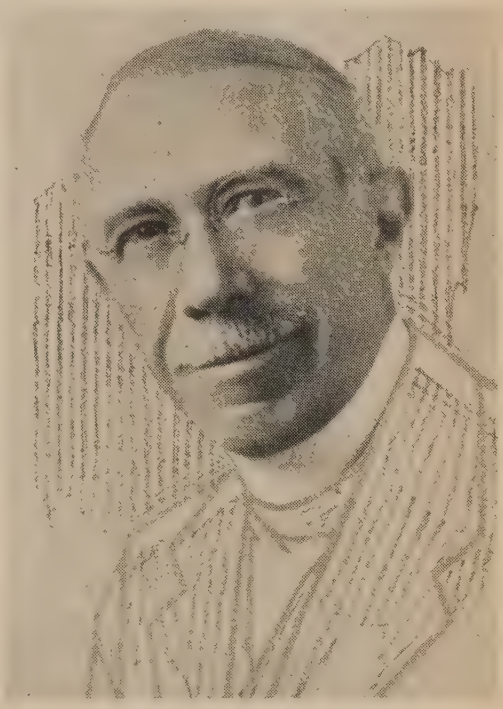
I DO NOT for a moment suppose that these words were consciously a prophecy of the radio, but they are at least a suggestion of our biggest modern wonder. One or two phases of broadcasting have often been used as symbols of the great realities of religion. With the annihilation of distance which it has helped to bring, we find it, for instance, more easy to believe than we did of old that God can speak directly to men. When President Roosevelt or George VI, or the Archbishop of Canterbury, or Hitler, or Mussolini can come into your room and mine to speak to us, we do not find it so difficult to think that the Eternal God, Maker of all this vastness and mystery, can also come and speak to us. We do not find it so difficult to believe that God cares for people, one by one, for in this modern miracle I am not left out, and you are not left out. And if some governments in these days should say: "You must not use your broadcasting instrument save to listen to certain things, you must not listen to Russia, or to the teachings of the Communists," no one in this country has yet, thank God, dared to tell us what we may listen to, and what we may not.

Then we are familiar with the thought that we can hear only those voices of which we have discovered the air to be full as we listen to them. Marvelous music may be coming over, or voices of men who have seen to the very heart of God; but unless I touch my little switch, I hear nothing. So the Eternal God may be speaking to us; he may have some word of guidance, hope, cheer he wants to bring to us at this moment, but unless we have the instrument—the pure heart—and unless we listen, shutting out other clamoring voices that are loudly making their appeal—unless we listen, we will not hear.

WE BROADCAST WHAT WE ARE!

Just one thing more on this side of the question. For one, I do not know a thing about the mechanism of the radio. Some of the boys in your family can make one and hear everything that is going on, but on this subject my ignorance is profound; just as I do not know a thing about the interior of a car, but I have driven one a good many thousand miles without, as yet, an accident. Yet are not some of you holding back from the great realities of the Christian faith because you do not understand Christianity? The infinite marvel of God—who can conceive where he came from; a God coming into human life and living among us that beautiful life of Jesus centuries ago—how can that change a world today? Very puzzling, is it not? Some of us are like the man of whom Henry Drummond used to tell, who gave up trying to be a Christian because there was a verse in Second Chronicles which he did not understand. No, "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him," "He that wills to do God's will shall know." Just as you tune in on your radio, or drive your car, so read your Bible, say your prayers humbly and sincerely, hold out a helping hand to your needy brother in Christ; and in ways you cannot understand you will begin to know the Infinite God.

But I am not going to speak about the marvel of the radio as it brings the world to my fireside; I want to speak of it as a transmitting agency. In a little book which came to my desk lately, by the Rev. W. H. Elliott, of London, whose helpful radio messages are known through a large part of the world, I found this sentence which set me thinking: "Every one of us is a spiritual broadcasting station; day by day, hour by hour, we are broadcasting silently to the world what we are." There is something for us all to think about. Call it Station



Alexander MacColl

IAM; there is a place for the ego in the building of a better world. I have a strong impression that a better day for America and for the world is not likely to come simply through a change in the government or through some new social order, Socialism, Communism or Fascism. More than anything else, the better day we are praying for will come through spiritual broadcasting stations, individual men and women who have discovered the true meaning and values of life, and are radiating them wherever they go.

Think of it for a moment. How do you happen to be what you are? Most of all because of certain spiritual broadcasting stations with which, from earliest years, you have been in contact. Day after day they have broadcast to you courage or fear, hope or despair, high ideals of life or cheap ideals of life, determination or flabby indifference. These qualities came to you, though often you hardly knew it, through spiritual broadcasting stations, from your father and your mother, your early teachers, some of your friends, your intimate associates

in business and in life. "I was born," says Sir Henry Jones, "in L'langernyw in 1852, and born again in 1876 in Edward Caird's classroom." Some of these people who have made us over are very unimportant people as the world counts them. The mother of Augustine, Monica, to whom he owed so much, used to say that all the good she had she had received from a decrepit maid servant, to whom her father entrusted the care and upbringing of his daughters.

I am very fond of the letter which Robert Louis Stevenson wrote when he was twenty-one to Alison Cunningham ("Cummy," as he called her), his old nurse. "Next time," he said, "when the spring comes around, and everything is beginning once again, if you should happen to think that you might have had a child of your own, and that it was hard you should have spent so many years taking care of someone else's prodigal, just you think this—you have been for a great deal in my life; you have made much that is in me, just as surely as if you had conceived me, and there are sons who are more ungrateful to their own mothers than I am to you. For I am not ungrateful, my dear Cummy, and it is with a very sincere emotion that I write myself, your little boy."

CHANGED LIVES THROUGH QUIET INFLUENCE

Some of these broadcasting stations, too, have been located in strange places, and they have borne their influence through quite ordinary incidents. Here, for instance, is a man very well known in the life of Great Britain, Sir Evelyn Wrench, founder of the English-Speaking Union, who describes the tremendous change that came into his life, and turned him from a mere money seeker into a real Christian, through the changing of the place in which he lived. For years he lived in a somewhat ordinary house, with somewhat ordinary people, and then one day a cousin asked him to live with her and her husband, and he said he would try it for six months. He stayed four years. "I was hypnotized," he says, "by worldly success. Power was the goal—as much power as possible. To exercise power you must have money; when you had money you could buy happiness and other things. In my cousin I found someone who had entirely different standards. Riches and ambition as a goal were beyond her comprehension; a burning faith was the mainspring of her life; she lived for others. As the years passed, the spell of that first house in me began to weaken. In seven years the physical body is said to change entirely. In four years my spiritual and mental outlook changed no less completely. Externally, I might look the same, but I was another individual."

Great spiritual broadcasting that! Often it functions quite unconsciously. I do not imagine Sir Evelyn's cousin had any idea what she was doing for him. We know so little, sometimes, of the effects we are producing. One day Frederick William Robertson stood at the door of his church at Brighton, much depressed about his preaching; he had done a poor job. But as he was shaking hands with the people who were leaving the church, there came a girl among them, and he smiled at her. And he was afterwards told that that smile brought hope and courage to a life that was almost ready to give up. Dr. Dale of Birmingham was going along the street one day and he met a woman carrying a heavy burden. As she passed him, she said: "God bless you, Dr. Dale." He had been greatly depressed, feeling that he could hardly go on, but that very humble, unconscious broadcasting station brought him back to himself. I think it is John Richard Green who says of one of his friends: "Just to have him shake hands with you in the morning and say, How do you do? is a speech in itself. It gives you a strong impression that men are not half as bad as you think, apologizes for unanswered letters, assures you of the warmest friendship, and sets your mind at rest on every topic which of old has made it anxious."

CHRISTIANITY BEGAN IN A SIMPLE MESSAGE

Do we ever think of these waves and vibrations which go out from us as we walk down the street and meet people? Just the way we say "Good morning" may start a man on a better day, or if we say, "I did not sleep well last night," "Business is rotten," "The government is all wrong"—this too has its influence. Here is a man who has been as badly treated by "fate's discourtesies" as any man I know, kicked about, unemployed, and you say to him: "How are you?" and he answers "All right—fine." Somehow you are a better man all the day for a casual meeting with that hero.

Have you ever thought how Christianity began? We read part of the story in two passages—John 1:35-51 and Acts 8:26-40. Two disciples of John heard him speaking of Jesus as the Lamb of God, and they followed Jesus. And Jesus said to them, What are you looking for? And they asked, Master, where do you live? and he said: "Come and see." Can you imagine anything simpler than that? "They came," we read, "and saw where he dwelt." Literal minds think that that means the house he lived in, but minds of greater insight see that what these men saw was the spiritual dwelling place of our Lord. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Somehow, they could never be the same again. And Andrew went out to find Peter, and Peter broadcast over the world what Christ had done for him, so that often the shadow of his passing became a healing and a benediction to men. And Philip found Nathanael and said to him: "We have found the Christ," and a little later he found the Ethiopian treasurer and preached to him Jesus—a great broadcasting station was functioning.

Marvelous the power of your broadcasting station and mine. It is operating one way or the other for others; life is a bigger and more beautiful thing because of it, or else a more hopeless and cheap and cynical business every day.

BROADCASTING INTO ETERNITY

I want to say just one thing more. I do not want my broadcasting station to operate only on the material plane. I do not think I could hope to have it operate with any success at all if it operates on that plane alone. In our farewell service for those we have loved and lost I sometimes offer a very beautiful prayer which has in it this sentence: "Give to our beloved who are with Thee this message of love which now we breathe to Thee in the silence"—that is spiritual broadcasting

which reaches out beyond this material sphere. It means very much to me to think that these dear ones can speak to me and I can speak to them, that I can tell some of them that I am at least trying to be true to the things they stood for, but that I tremendously need their help.

I think that is a perfectly Scriptural prayer: "Give to our beloved who are with Thee this message of love which now we breathe to Thee in the silence"—in part, at least, that is what the communion of saints means to me. I could not have stood in this place for twenty-five years; I could not hope to go on for another year, if I did not believe that help and guidance came to me from loved ones, not lost but gone before. Is it a wild and foolish thought? No, I rather think you are wild and foolish if your whole thought is to prepare your children and grandchildren for life by leaving to them a generous estate to dispose of; if your thought is only of making money and spending it, with no thought of the things that are unseen. In God's universe that is insanity.

Cultivate then your broadcasting station, keep in touch with God, keep in touch with the ministering spirits sent forth to minister, and you will be greatly helped to build a better world.

Christ and America's Sixty Families

By Arthur S. Beale

What lack I yet? Matthew 19:20.

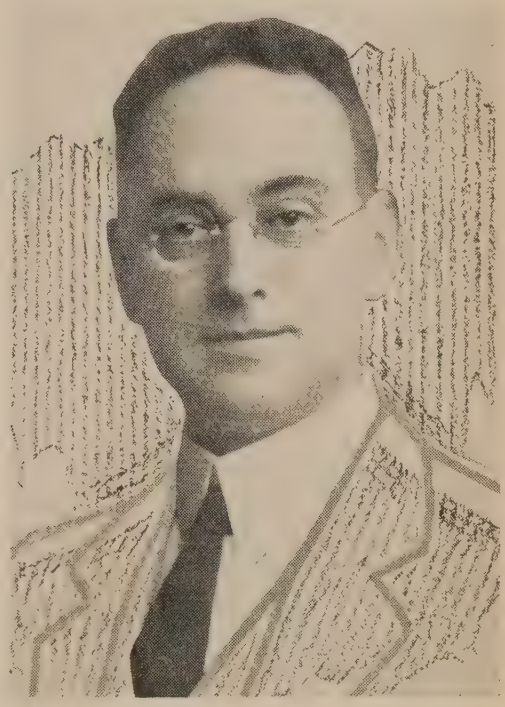
AMERICA is slowly coming to see that we must deal with the question of vast wealth in the presence of wide and woeful poverty. The Christian church has here a major problem in its thinking. How can men and women of great riches be helped to serve rather than to enslave humanity? Two things may be said at once. First, the preacher should study himself lest the motive behind his message be envy. The human heart is very subtle. Too often criticism springs from our own wistfulness for wealth. To see clearly yet deal lovingly is a primary duty.

Second, we are learning by tragic mistakes that we cannot make men good by law. That lesson needs to sink deeply into our programs. Men may be forced to obey law until they hate it and long to break it down. But the genius of the Christian gospel is still resting on the New Testament rather than the Old, on love rather than law, on winning men away from sin rather than rebuking them for waywardness, on the patient, understanding faith and love of a father, as we are children of our Father in heaven, rather than on the military might of dictators as the children of this generation.

THE RICH YOUNG RULER TODAY

It is good to begin with some words of Andrew Carnegie, with a determination to appreciate his late generosity rather than a will to criticize his early methods: "Surplus wealth is a sacred trust which its possessor is bound to administer in his lifetime for the good of the community."

How one wishes he had the power to paint vivid pictures! In view of the recent book *America's Sixty Families,* by Ferdinand Lundberg, would it not be good if one could take the brush of a Hofmann, as we study the original of his great painting, "Christ and the Rich Young Ruler, in Riverside Church, New York, and instead of the richly robed heir of fifty years ago, paint a composite of all the fine, alert, athletic, eager sons of wealth in our America and present this composite rich young man before our best conception of the Master—strong, understanding, with eyes that search the soul as well as see the future—and let them talk together with that conscious background of the beggar and the widow watching and listening? Think you it would be any whit different? Yes, only the setting.



Arthur S. Beale

Imagine them in Rockefeller Center or the Empire State Building—those two men, the privileged youth of our richest families face to face, in our own great city, with the Master of Men. "Teacher, what shall I do to live?" How can I really live the life that is life indeed? That same persistent, insistent question, as old as eternity, as new as every new high school or college student! And the same old answer, unchanged save as the Master makes it vital: "You know the commandments. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not commit adultery. Do not bear false witness." And that same wondrous reply: "All these have I done from my youth up." I somehow feel that never in history can so many young people say it as sincerely as can the youth of America today. And then: "What lack I yet?" It is recorded that the Master looking upon the young man loved him. How deeply, how tenderly, how longingly! "O dearly, dearly has he loved; and we must love him, too."

And then, it is recorded, the Master said: "One thing

thou lackest." Not a general statement, but an individual analysis—the great Physician prescribing for an individual patient, the world's supreme Psychologist penetrating to the very core of the world's deep mindset, the Ambassador of God searching the soul of the ages: "One thing *thou* lackest. Go sell what thou hast" . . . that which hinders thee, that which is a crutch on which thou leanest, that bed on which thou art so sound asleep while misery wails just outside the window and war leaps into world flame on every horizon . . . "go sell what thou hast, and come, take up thy cross and follow me." And the record says: "he turned sorrowfully away for he had great possessions." Face to face with reality trust in riches is a terribly poor thing. Could we be trusted with it? Probably not. It was ancient Martial who said: "You often ask me, Priscus, what sort of person I should be if I were suddenly to become rich and powerful. Who can determine what would be his future conduct? Tell me, if you were to become a lion, what sort of a lion would you be?"

NOT ROMANCE, BUT TRAGEDY

All that we know is, there stalks tragedy. When Lady Astor was in Washington this winter, the Senate adjourned that men might do her honor, and one asked: "What about the romance of the Duke of Windsor?" And she replied: "That's not romance; that's tragedy!"

Turn to the new book. Read there of $12,000 spent by a rich man in America for a marble bathtub with gold-plated fixtures while more than half the farm homes of America have no bathtubs. "That's not romance; that's tragedy!" A family spending $250,000 on a coming-out party for a daughter in a hotel near the national capitol, while 250,000 girls across America cannot find enough to keep themselves pure. "That's not romance; that's tragedy!" One man in Oyster Bay owning one hundred Lincoln cars while in Lincoln's own state of Illinois a million men tramp, tramp begging a bite to eat. "That's not romance; that's tragedy!" Every delivery of a baby in Doctors' Hospital in New York costing $10,000, while across America a million prospective mothers shiver with cold and almost hope their baby will be stillborn. "That's not romance; that's tragedy."

Then let Ferdinand Lundberg make one further comment: "Nothing would be more gratifying than to be able to say at this juncture that the swashbuckling administration . . . with all its war cries against 'the moneychangers in the temple,' the 'economic royalists,' the 'gold-plated anarchists,' had succeeded in placing a check rein on the restless, powerful, self-centered clans of great wealth. But such a conclusion, unfortunately, would not be justified by the facts." "That's not romance; that's tragedy!"

How one wishes it could all be accomplished by government, by law! But it falls back on religion and the Christian church—and "that's not romance; that's tragedy!" For the church has failed somewhere in the gospel of Christ. Greater wealth than ever in the world's history; more of poverty than ever in the world's history—and the answer, some of us believe, lies only in the realm of religion; but we do not know how to apply it, to our confusion and woe. "That's not romance; that's tragedy!"

Can you not imagine that rich young man of old walking away from the Master and going back to his inherited wealth? "What!" I hear him saying to himself, "give up security for a dream?" "Get the derision of my friends by going out with a visionary?" "Trade my wealth for a cross?" And he laughed, "Ha! Ha!" Let twenty-five years pass. He is now a member of the Sanhedrin, supreme court of his country, highly respected, affluent, influential; but his daughter is divorced and his son has hung himself as a spendthrift, ne'er-do-well. "That's not romance; that's tragedy!" Twenty-five years more pass. The man is seventy-five. A.D. 70 has come and gone. His beloved city is in ruins for want of the vision and the faith of that Master from whom he turned. He might have saved his city. And he himself is in Rome, slave of a Roman general. "That's not romance; that's tragedy!" Twenty-five years more pass. One feels beyond one's depth; but let a great poet with a world of insight speak. Dante in his Inferno visits the nether world with Vergil as his guide. "Who is that nameless one gnawed with remorse?" Dante asks Vergil. "Let us flee!" cries the poet. "That is the youth who made the Great Refusal!" "That's not romance; that's tragedy!" Well may we ask our own hearts across America: "What lack I yet?"

But turn the page. Come with me and behold another youth, hero of German hearts, courageous submarine commander, who might have been rich but instead took up his cross. Today he stands before the Nazi court with a high courage and demands the reason for his imprisonment. Tomorrow he may be dead. The cross still waits for men with adventure in their hearts for Christ. And hear Martin Niemöller's own words as he faces life with Christ: "Life is not what we know and plan it to be, but what we trust in and dare to do!" That's not tragedy; that's romance! When the mood of high faith is upon me I would rather stand beside Martin Niemöller with the cross just ahead than with any supposedly fortunate youth of America, inheriting millions and not knowing what to do with one's own soul.

THE ETERNAL CALL TO YOUTH

Is not that the constant, eternal call of Christ to the youth of every age? A young man faced west in a far land walking out of the known security of his own people knowing that "life is not what we know and plan it to be; but what we trust in and dare to do"; and it is recorded of Abraham that "he looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God." That's not tragedy; that's romance! It is recorded of another young man who had left riches and high position which were his by inheritance that he gave his life to Christ, knowing that "life is not what we know and plan it to be, but what we trust in and dare to do." And it is written that he said: "Behold I go bound in spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there; but only that the Holy Spirit testifieth unto me in every city saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But I hold not my life dear to myself so that I may accomplish my course." That's not tragedy; that's romance!

Of ten thousand others the same might be said, men

and women who have shouldered the cross and marched out of the city of comfort and security that the kingdom of God might prevail. And of every such rugged soul, courageous, filled with integrity, on whom rests the sole hope of America and of the future be it said: "That's not tragedy; that's romance!" For only as our fine, upstanding, athletic, keen-minded, rich young men and women of America catch the vision of the Christ and in some new order of St. Francis and Francis Xavier count their inherited wealth and family pride and position as refuse that they may win Christ, devoting their all to the building of the new nation that must come, shall we be worthy to be called Christians.

And in the face of that high call, is it not good to stand before the Master and ask: "What lack I yet?" That is not tragedy; that is romance!

Wanted—A Sterner Faith!

We shall have to recognize that God is greater, sterner, and more austere than our sentimental popular Christianity commonly suggests. For our difficulty with this problem is not simply self-centeredness but sentimentality. If a man starts with a picture of the universe as run by a sweet, indulgent deity, he is doomed to be let down. In saying this, one need not deny the gentle aspects of Christian experience. There are hours when the Unseen Friend within makes real everything that Jesus said about the Father's individual care. It is true that ". . . . warm, sweet, tender, even yet, a present help is he." While, however, that is true, it is not the whole truth, and whenever partial truth is taken for whole truth dangerous fallacy ensues.

The loveliest forget-me-nots I have ever seen are in the high Alps. They are beautiful, running their blue glories up to the very edges of the snow. But lovely as they are, they are not the whole of the high Alps. The high Alps are towering altitudes with austere aspects that forget-me-nots do not exhaust. So is the great God. At no point has our too sentimental religious liberalism done more harm to the truth than here.

Mark Twain once reported the saying of Darwin's father, that Unitarianism was a featherbed to catch falling Christians. Well, Unitarians need not feel specially hit by that. That is true in general of the whole modern, liberal movement in religion. We almost exclusively discover God in the lovely, desirable, beautiful aspects of life. Our fathers discovered him there too but not exclusively. They found God also in the stern, severe, sometimes terrific facts of life. They saw the penalties of the eternal laws falling terribly, with God himself behind the laws, not trying to make life easy for man but trying to make man great enough for life, holding him up to high standards, drawing him by opportunity, pushing him by punishment, letting the curse fall when he refused. That austere view of God is greater and truer than much of our sentimental popular Christianity.

H. T. Dale.

How full of "signs and wonders" our world is! The marvels of life and growth daily seen about us become miraculous beyond belief, when we study them. Who can explain why the bulb in our garden sends up its green shoots each year? Who can say how the fragile, bright-hued bird can find his way across hundreds of miles of sea and land to the same tree where last year's nest was built? These are but two of the everyday "miracles" which speak to us of a Power which holds sway in our world.

Prof. Edwin B. Frost, director of Yerkes Observatory, once said: "When at last such mysteries are solved after patient research, it will be found that they are operations of natural law in God's world. For Omniscience and Omnipotence there are no miracles."

The Christian Leader.

A Pastoral Prayer

By Edward Scribner Ames

O GOD, Great Life of the world and of ourselves —we pour out our souls in wonder and love. We commune with Thee as with one like ourselves, for we hunger after understanding love, and for wise counsel and deep comfort. Children of the day, we reach out toward the past to hold the treasures it has given, and we seek for still greater satisfactions in the future. Enable us to learn from the experiences that have gone and to face the dawn of new days with confidence and trust. Help us to see the way we take in the light of wisdom and serious purpose.

When we stumble, may we have strength to rise again; when we are hurt, may we find balm to heal us; when we are lost and undone, may light arise upon our darkness. If weeping endures for the night, may joy come with the morning, and when we have borne the burden and heat of the day may there be rest at evening time.

In a troubled world of so much strife and violence we are grateful for quiet places of peace and beauty. When the storms overwhelm us grant us refuge and shelter until the darkness is past. May the hours of companionship and joy outweigh the hours of anxiety and pain. Help us to cling to the sunnier side of doubt and trust in the anchors of faith that surely hold. Renew a right spirit within us, and fill our hearts with love, and the things that are of good report.

Lead us into the company of the wise and of the strong, of those who are aspiring and understanding. Touch our souls with sympathy for any who suffer, for any who are lonely or afraid of high places. Open the book of knowledge of life before our eyes, and lift any curtains of cloud that hide the sun and the stars in the heavens above us. Reveal to us anew the vision of Jesus Christ and of the way in which he would lead us evermore. Amen.

'Today We Found Arbutus'

By Bruce S. Wright

THE words of my title, which head a lovely poem by Winnie Lynch Rockett, give to me a satisfying picture of what Lent means, and what our Lenten observance should bring.

Lent, like arbutus, has the springtime touch. In our temperate zone the long, hard winter is drawing to a close, the promise of spring is in the air, days are perceptibly longer, we look forward to the glowing warmth of unclouded skies—new life sings and speaks in all things, on every hand.

In my youth Lent meant very little to me. It meant little to the Evangelical Church generally in the smaller towns and cities of America in the "gay nineties." There was little recognition of Easter as the climactic day of the church year.

Likewise, in my early ministry, I was not conscious of the exceeding value of Lent for the refreshing of my church and the renewal of my people. I am afraid I had a superior, if not cynical, attitude toward the whole keeping of Lent. My thought was: If a thing is worth doing for a few weeks it is worth doing throughout the year.

Things are different now. Is it that I have changed, or has the whole Protestant appraisal of Lent changed? Whatever the reason I know there has been developed a Lenten opportunity and fulfillment that has made a distinct contribution to our personal and corporate Christian faith.

● *The Rewards of Lent*

Therefore I find myself now looking forward to Lent, much as the garden lover looks forward to garden time. The garden lover sends for the seed and nursery catalogues, delightedly pores over them, plots his garden on paper, plans just what new plants and seeds he will order this year, then waits and longs for warming breezes and softening earth, meanwhile dreaming dreams of the garden that is to be.

I look forward to Lent as the lover of the woods looks forward to early walks through the forest as soon as the snow has fled. That is, I am a Lenten garden-dreamer, a pre-Easter woods-hiker, scanning the ground, eagerly looking for new life and the promise of things to come.

The rewards of Lent are not revealed to the casual observer or the superficial seeker. The blessings of Lent, like arbutus, are "hidden where the seeker must brush leaves aside to find the source of that faint odor on the air."

One cannot walk nonchalantly into the church, sit down in a pew with the air and attitude that says: "Now, here I am, move me if you can; impress my mind and spirit if you have the power!" Just as, in an argument or debate, one cannot be convinced against his will, neither can one find spiritual fragrance by the spirit that says, in effect: "I dare you; do it if you can!"

● *Helps for the Lenten Seeker*

Increasingly, as the years come and go, I believe in all well-planned helps for the one who voluntarily seeks. There are the helps to the individual. For, after all, religion is pretty much a personal affair. The things we think,

Bruce S. Wright

the things we read, the things we do, as individuals, have a tremendous effect upon our personal religious experience and development.

Books and readings, studies that are planned and carefully prepared, having the individual in mind, are of first-rate importance and value. The little booklet of daily readings which the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America has prepared and distributed for so many years has been most helpful in guiding the mind of the seeker. It is of particular value because it takes a single theme, and follows it through the entire Lenten period. Also, the theme, in all its phases, is treated by a single mind, thus giving unity as well as direction.

"The Upper Room," now in its third year, now printing nearly a million copies every quarter, is one of the best guides to daily reading and prayer, and is both devotional and practical. It has been amazingly fruitful in its spiritual service. It is doing for evangelicals what the daily, prescribed readings do, in their way, for Christian Scientists, Unity followers and similar groups. Most of us need the spur of a directed, regular, brief reading for the cultivation of our inner life. Having that, we actually do "grow in grace."

● *Special Lenten Services*

Then there are the various Lenten quests by groups, classes, companies and congregations. They too are rewarding to the earnest seeker. Spiritual arbutus will be found by those who brush aside the leaves of lethargy and indifference, and will take time for the search.

The church should be the center of such quests. Let the Sunday services during Lent follow announced, connected themes. Likewise the midweek service will increase in value and attendance if the Lenten quest is ordered and orderly, if it leads somewhere and has easily distinguished signposts along the way. With the decline of the Sunday evening worship in multitudes of churches there is a definite need of and place for a meeting between Sundays in Protestantism, a meeting that is as well planned and conducted as the Sunday morning service of worship.

Let variety also characterize our Lenten journey into the spring woods! There are different paths that lead to the same woodland banks. Vesper musical services on Sunday afternoons during Lent carry a spiritual fragrance they alone can give.

Arbutus will be found in purely secular meeting places, gladly given over, in many instances, during the Lenten season for the inspiring message of the Christian year. Luncheon clubs welcome speakers during the Lenten period who come avowedly to present the Lenten claims and the Lenten message. Brief noonday services in a downtown or neighborhood theater, planned by ministerial associations, reach multitudes who would not otherwise be touched. Nor is the large city the only place where such noonday meetings during Lent can be carried on successfully. Some that are conspicuously effective are held in our smaller cities, even in the villages.

● *Lent Implies the Social Gospel*

Let the full gospel be spoken at our Lenten services! It is not a case of "either or," it is "both and." The Lenten period is not meant to minister only to the devotional life of the individual. That is only part of the gospel of Jesus. There is place in the Lenten

program for the social message. The way of life that Jesus proclaimed is a community affair. If the individual is genuinely touched by it he must share it.

The president of Princeton Theological Seminary has suggested that there are three dominant mind patterns today: the Jungle Mind, the Mind of the Starry Universe, the Cooperative Mind. Their particular qualities are readily noted. The mind of Christ, the mind that is to receive special emphasis and illumination during the favored Lenten period, is the Cooperative Mind. He who does something in the name of the Man of Galilee, for others, with others, will witness with gladness: "Today we found arbutus."

Elusive, frail arbutus! Every year
I search for it with shaken hands and heart;
And when, my search rewarded, I can grasp
A spray, its beauty stabs me like a dart—
I would repudiate the churlish spring
That failed to bring this lovely, fragile thing!

I feel the same way about Lent. I would repudiate the Lenten program that failed to bring this necessary spiritual renewal.

Lenten Verse

Prayer

LORD, forgive—
That I have dwelt too long on Golgotha,
My wracked eyes fixed
On Thy poor, tortured human form upon the cross,
And have not seen
The lilies in Thy dawn-sweet garden bend
To anoint Thy risen feet; nor known the ways
Thy radiant spirit walks abroad with men.

PAULINE SCHROY.

Refusal

"HERE is my heart; it's clean.
I give it, Lord, to Thee."
And then I saw God plainly
Turn aside from me.

"I do not want your heart,
Closed tightly to other men.
Open it up, my child,
And return it to me again."

RAYMOND KRESENSKY.

Comrade Christ

GIVE us Jesus Christ, the Carpenter.
What to us is your white-liveried God?
O men of the anvil, of the loom, the sod,
They have hid our God in a golden sepulcher;
They have made of our Christ a sniveling, pampered priest,
A paltry giver of fine bread and wine—
Our Christ is a God of men, as Man divine,
Holding in brotherhood the last and least.
He toils in the desert places by our side;
He delves with us beneath the granite hill;
He weeps above our brothers who have died;
He dreams with us in the darkness hot and still:
No surpliced shriver of the sins of men—
Christ, the Carpenter, has come again.

VERNE BRIGHT.

God Hears Prayer

IF radio's slim fingers can pluck a melody
From night—and toss it over a continent or sea;
If the petaled white notes of a violin
Are blown across the mountains or the city's din;
If songs, like crimson roses, are culled from thin blue air—
Why should mortals wonder if God hears prayer?

ETHEL ROMIG FULLER.

These poems are reprinted from *1000 Quotable Poems,* compiled by Thomas Curtis Clark, with permission of the publishers, Willett, Clark & Co.

Death in Life

HE always said he would retire
When he had made a million clear,
And so he toiled into the dusk
From day to day, from year to year.

At last he put his ledgers up
And laid his stock reports aside—
But when he started out to live
He found he had already died.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN.

The True Need

I DO not wish to see my sins more plain,
But this: to know Thy life, without a stain.

I would not see the vileness of my heart,
But this would know: how pure and true Thou art.

I would forget my paltry life, so small,
And know Thy greatness, Thou, my All in All.

Oh! teach me not how deep my spirit's night,
But flood me with Thy beams, Thou Perfect Light!

THOMAS CURTIS CLARK.

If Jesus Came Back Today

IF Jesus came back today
What would the people say?
Would they cheer Him and strew the way
With garlands of myrtle and bay
As they did on that distant day
When He came to Jerusalem?
What would America say
If Jesus came back today?

We fashion great churches and creeds
But the heart of the people still bleeds
And the poor still rot in their needs.
We display with pride His cross
In the midst of our pagan life
While we hug to our hearts the dross
Of our selfishness and strife.
What sacrifice have we made
To live the love He prayed?
What willing blood have we shed
To do the deeds He said?
To be popular and well-fed
We forsake the way He led
And follow a ghost instead!

VINCENT GODFREY BURNS.

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

REV. RALPH W. SOCKMAN *was associate minister of the Madison Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church (now Christ Church), New York City, for two years and has been its minister since 1917. He has been prominent in the larger affairs of his denomination and is known throughout the country because of his Sunday morning sermon broadcasts over the network of the N.B.C. His most recent book is entitled* *Recoveries in Religion*— *the Quillian Lectures delivered at Emory University.*

Rev. MAUDE ROYDEN, *the world's most famous woman preacher, became widely known when she was assistant preacher at the City Temple, London, 1917-20. With the late Rev. Percy Dearmer, she founded the Fellowship Services at Kensington, which were later transferred to the Guildhouse. As social settlement worker, advocate of woman's suffrage, lecturer, editor and author, she has added to the laurels that have come to her as a minister.*

Since 1915 Rev. HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK *has been professor of practical theology at Union Theological Seminary and during this same period he has ministered at Riverside Church in New York City. He reaches an audience of millions through his Sunday afternoon radio broadcasts. Dr. Fosdick's earlier books, including* *The Meaning of Prayer, The Meaning of Service* *and* *The Manhood of the Master,* *have become classics. His latest volume is entitled* *Successful Christian Living.*

Rabbi ABRAHAM J. FELDMAN *has led the activities of the Congregation Beth Israel, Hartford, Conn., since 1925. Earlier pastorates were in New York and Philadelphia. He is a leader in the national activities of his church, and is president of the Hartford Club of Ministers and Rabbis. Author of a dozen volumes of essays and sermons, Rabbi Feldman has recently published a book entitled* *The American Jew: a Study of Backgrounds.*

Ordained in the Congregational Church in 1891, Rev. WILLARD B. THORP *held pastorates in Binghamton, N. Y., Chicago and San Diego, and has been pastor of First Church, Palo Alto, Cal., since 1920.*

Rev. ALEXANDER MACCOLL *was born in Scotland and came to America as a young man. Early in his career he was a newspaper editor, and following his ordination in 1897, he held pastorates in Newark, N. J., Briarcliff Manor, N. Y. and Morristown, N. J. He has been minister of the Second Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia since 1911.*

Early pastorates of Rev. ARTHUR S. BEALE *were at Stoneham and Lowell, Mass., and Laconia, N. H., then he succeeded his father as pastor of Grand Avenue Congregational Church in Milwaukee, and served there from 1924 to 1934. He is now pastor at Waterville, Me.*

Rev. EDWARD SCRIBNER AMES *is minister at the University Church of Disciples in Chicago.*

Rev. BRUCE S. WRIGHT *is minister at the First Methodist Episcopal Church in Erie, Pa.*

TITLES AND TEXTS — What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

GEORGE LAWRENCE PARKER, Unitarian, Keene, N. H. "When God Went to Church in 1938." Mal. 3:1—"The Lord shall suddenly come to his temple."

W. P. LEMON, First Presbyterian, Ann Arbor, Mich. "Unfinished Business." Jon. 3:1—"And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the *second* time."

EARL H. THAYER, First Congregational, Cleveland, O. "The Church and the *Church.*" Rev. 21:22—"I saw no temple there."

CHARLES S. HAGER, First Congregational, Vergennes, Vt. "Power-Politics versus the Cross." John 18:36—"Jesus answered [Pilate], My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

. . . . . .

Title of Sermon

. . . . . .

Text used (write out the text)

. . . . . .

Name of minister

. . . . . .

Name of church

. . . . . .

Address

GRANT F. ANDERSON, First Baptist, Cedar Rapids, Ia. "Getting Help from Religion." Job 4:6—"Let your religion reassure you." (Moffatt)

TALMAGE C. JOHNSON, First Baptist, Kinston, N. C. "Can Religion Save Us?" Matt. 27:42—"He saved others; himself he cannot save."

ALFRED GRANT WALTON, Tompkins Avenue Congregational, Brooklyn, N. Y. "Are Ye Able?" Rev. 6:17—"For the day of their wrath is come and who is able to stand?"

RICHARD R. HULBERT, Congregational, Port Washington, Wis. "Broken Cisterns." Jer. 2:13—"My people have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

DEWITT L. MILLER, Church of the Brethren, Meyersdale, Pa. "The Totalitarianism of Christianity." Luke 14:33—"So therefore whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

ORVA L. ICE, Baptist, Wilkinsburg, Pa. "The Star Witness." I John 5:10—"He that believeth hath the witness in himself."

W. T. VANDEVER, First Baptist, Erie, Pa. "Homespun Philosophy in a Machine Age." Matt. 5:44—"Love your enemies."

FRED H. DAWSON, First Presbyterian, Belleville, Kan. "The Challenge of Untrodden Paths." Josh. 3:4b—"Ye have not passed this way heretofore."

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The Event of the Month

AS these words are written the whole world is shuddering at the prospect opened up by the speech of Adolf Hitler in which the lines of Nazi policy for the future are laid down with unprecedented candor and truculence. It is now evident that the Fuehrer, having torn up all the treaties made at the end of the Great War, is determined to undo the political consequences of those treaties. He intends to get Austria and Czechoslovakia and Hungary back into the German orbit, and perhaps Poland, or a large part of it, also. He intends to get back the colonies taken from Germany by the Versailles treaty. He intends to reproject the Pan-German goal by assuming protective responsibility for the German population of every nearby country. The logic of this principle will extend its application to distant lands like Brazil, Argentina, Chili and the United States, where large colonies of Germans reside. Its effect will be to make Germans an unassimilable element in every country not dominated by the Fatherland. In the United States it spells the revival of hyphenated Americanism. Great Britain's reply to Hitler was to remove from office the one cabinet member, Anthony Eden, who has opposed coming to terms with the dictators. Britain now is free to negotiate with Mussolini and will no doubt concede his demand for recognition of Ethiopia and, in effect, for an acknowledgement that the Mediterranean is an Italian lake. Then Britain will negotiate with Hitler, and grant the substance of his demands. This course will lead, it is hoped, to the pacification of Europe. Four great empires will then dominate Europe and Asia—the German Empire, the Roman Empire (including Spain), the Japanese Empire (including China) and Great Britain. Whether this means peace, or merely the setup for the final cataclysm only time will tell. Its present effect in the United States is to confirm our government's policy of isolation.

Hitler Tells The World

The Book of the Month

RECOVERIES IN RELIGION, *by Ralph W. Sockman. Cokesbury Press. $2.00.*

THIS book just scintillates with common sense and fine insights. The author holds that we have lost something from our religion, and he sets out to find the clues for its recovery. At first, I did not like the title. The word "recovery" touched one of my pet prejudices. I never like the implication that we can solve our problems by recovering something from the past. But this idea of going back for *clues*—that is another matter. Probably that is the main use to which the past can be put. We never know that we have lost something precious save as we compare our present spiritual estate with that of the past. Dr. Sockman says that ours is a "lost generation" and he finds in the past the clues by which we can understand what we have lost. We have lost an awareness of authority, we have lost our balance, we have lost our spiritual radiance, we have lost moral and spiritual power. To the recovery of each of these he gives a chapter. His final chapter is on "The Recovery of Preaching." I wish I could get every reader of The Pulpit to read and inwardly digest those nine pages in which Dr. Sockman makes the distinction between preaching as "professional salesmanship," and preaching as a divine calling. He puts his finger on one of our major sins when he says that we preachers proceed altogether too much on the maxims of business. We must "put it across." "The public be pleased." "The customer is always right." Under the spell of these maxims we have cheapened our high calling. Such preaching defeats the divine end. Over against this "selling" of religion Dr. Sockman offers a penetrating interpretation of the ministry as a divine calling.

A Thought for the Month

ONE of the most difficult distinctions which religion is called upon to make is that between what God does and what we men must do. The distinction is fundamental if we are to think clearly, and equally so if we are to live religiously. Failure to make the distinction is the cause of most of our confusion in theology. Barthianism, following Calvin, puts the whole responsibility upon God whose will operates upon man in ways that are beyond man's comprehension, and beyond even his power to cooperate. At the opposite extreme, humanism puts the entire responsibility upon man, who must use his own unaided effort to achieve whatever salvation his intelligence is able to contrive. Neither of these conceptions is true to the Christian insight. Christianity has from the beginning regarded man and God as cooperating in a genuine partnership. We are workers together with God. To construct a view of life on one term of the partnership is to vitiate the Christian faith. We must guard against the return of a hard Calvinistic determinism on the one hand, and a shallow humanism on the other. This we can do only by keeping clear what it is that God does and what it is that man does. Paul set the matter in its true light when he said that his own part was to plant and that of Apollos was to water, while God's part was to give the increase. This little illustration covers every situation from the smallest practical details of daily living, to the great issues with which both church and state are now confronted, and to the cosmic order itself. The significance of man lies in the fact that at last God has found a partner, a genuine helper, in his creative activity. The business in which this partnership is engaged is not man's business but God's. Yet man is a real member of the firm! Whether the business prospers or languishes depends upon man's willingness to do the plowing and the planting and the watering. God can be trusted to give the increase.

God's Part and Man's Part

Charles Clayton Morrison

Lent, the Minister's Opportunity

Here are eight important books which will bring both information and illumination to ministers during this season of spiritual sowing and reaping.

World Chaos or World Christianity

BY HENRY SMITH LEIPER

This Lenten season is going to be different from all previous Lenten seasons. The great message that went out to the world from the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences will cast light on all discussions. That message in that *the Christian church must save civilization from destruction.* Every minister must know the "findings" of the conferences. Here is the whole story in an inexpensive book. Comprehensive and readable.

$1.50

Meditations on the Cross

BY TOYOHIKO KAGAWA

On the dark background of the war in the Orient shines the Gospel of Toyohiko Kagawa, which is the Gospel of Christ vividly set forth for these times. With Kagawa the Cross is at the center of religion. His message has never seemed more relevant and important than in the year 1938.

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A Reasonable Faith

BY RUSSELL H. CLINCHY

Here are sermons and addresses on the outstanding themes of religion that have actually been given before modern audiences. Wise pastors will base their Lenten sermons on these chapters of Dr. Clinchy's book. Some chapter titles: The Order of Things; A Guide for Seekers; Death—the Termination or Fulfillment of Life; The Use of Prayer; The Divine Society of the Church.

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The Daily Altar

BY WILLETT AND MORRISON

Throughout the Lenten season, ministers will be preaching on the devotional life, and will call attention to the need for the regular use of a guidebook of devotion. Here is the book that has been placed in the homes of many hundreds of churches—through the advice of alert pastors.

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COMPILED BY THOMAS CURTIS CLARK

These testimonies of the poets to the truth of immortality will add luster to any man's preaching during the Lenten season. $1.25

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BY JOHN T. McNEILL

Halford E. Luccock calls attention to the fact that here is a book of *hope.* Prof. McNeill reveals the silver strand of faith and hope that has illuminated the history of the church from Augustine's "City of God" down to the present. A book of solid information and of assurance to modern Christians.

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You Can Find God

BY EDWARD SHILLITO

Says Charles Clayton Morrison: "I know what you will do with this book if it falls into your hands: You will read it with spiritual delight and you will lay it on a shelf near your desk. When your own thoughts grow thin you will pick it up for a moment or two, and then turn back to your work, your mind and heart glowing with new insight." $1.50

The best thing about Religion is its Poetry—said the late Dr. Cadman.

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The book includes special sections of poems for the Great Days of the Year, also a section of poems on the theme of Immortality. A highly useful volume for Lenten and Easter use.

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